



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MAYOR DAVID R. MARTIN**  
**MAYOR OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**

**PUBLIC HEARING by the**

**COMMERCE COMMITTEE OF THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

Senator Hartley, Representative Perone, Ranking Members Frantz and Camillo, and all members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify about such an important issue.

My name is David Martin, Mayor of Stamford, Connecticut. I submit this testimony in support of Proposed H.B. No. 6597: AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FORMER SACRED HEART ACADEMY IN STAMFORD. This is a critical project to support the long-term vitality the city of Stamford and lower Fairfield County.

Stamford is a dynamic, growing city, currently the third largest in the state with over 125,000 residents. We have been very fortunate to experience continuous growth such as this. It is anticipated by many that Stamford will likely become the second largest city in Connecticut within the next few years.

As our city has grown over the past twenty-five years, so too has our student population. In fact, our student population has outpaced the growth of our general population. We have 40% more students enrolled in our school system now than we did twenty-five years ago, with more than 16,000 students today.

Stamford's growth has been supported by a strong and diverse economy. We are the largest financial district in the New York Metro Area outside of New York City and are home to four Fortune 500 companies. In collaboration with the state, the city has been able to attract and retain a number of businesses. Cranes continue to dot the Stamford skyline as housing developers work to satisfy the increasing demand in the marketplace.

I am very pleased with the progress our city is making and am most appreciative of the partnership we have established with the state in order to support many of the initiatives that have made Stamford what it is today.



As the city and its school-aged population have grown, we continue working diligently to provide services to the residents of our city. Delivering a quality education to our children is one of our most important, and most costly, investments. While the city has invested in its school infrastructure over the years, it has become clear that utilizing the property at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue is a necessity if we are to keep up with the growth.

The property is the former site of the Sacred Heart Academy, which is centrally located in the city. Renovating the facilities there – which also have historic value, I might add – will be of incredible value to our community and the entire region. It would also help the city address its growing population by accommodating hundreds of additional children.

I should also mention that as a city it is not only our school infrastructure that we must invest in to enable and accommodate growth, but also our transportation and public safety infrastructure. Stamford, like our fellow cities in Connecticut, faces many pressing needs. As you may know, the Stamford last week announced plans to build a new police headquarters, which is expected to cost between \$50-75 million, which also requires bonding. Replacing the 60 year old structure and constructing a new police station presents an usual financial challenge to the city, but these projects cannot be delayed. Needless to say, at the same time we must also continue to invest in our roads and other public facilities as well.

Simply put, there are very large and growing demands in the City of Stamford that must be met. I know this committee is well attuned to our needs as well as those throughout Fairfield County and is working hard to address the issues we face as a region and as a state. The property at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue is one component and a critical element in Stamford's ability to support our public education system. It in no small way impacts the long-term vitality of our city and state.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit this testimony today and for your consideration on such an important issue.